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LETTER DATED 30 JANUARY 1991 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I would be grateful if you could bring to the attention of the members of the Security Council the letter I have sent today to His Excellency, Mr. Tariq Aziz. A copy of the letter is attached.

(Signed) Javier PEREZ de CUELLAR

Annex

Letter dated 30 January 1991 from the Secretary-General addressed to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq

I have read your letter of 24 January 1991 (S/22154) with regret and cannot but reject its connotations.

When we met at Amman on 31 August 1990 and at Baghdad on 12 January 1991, and again when I met President Saddam Hussein on 13 January 1991, I stated that our efforts to avert the unfolding tragedy would fail unless Iraq could signify its readiness to comply with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, beginning with resolution 660 (1990). On each occasion, after returning to New York, I reported the views of your Government to the Security Council.

As you know, on 15 January 1991 (see S/22091), I appealed again to President Saddam Hussein to indicate his readiness to proceed in the manner I had suggested to him, so that the course of events could be turned away from catastrophe and towards a new era of justice and harmony, based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. I pledged, in such circumstances, to work with him, and with all others concerned, to bring just and lasting peace to the Middle East as a whole.

Today, I reiterate my 15 January appeal, as I did on 22 January 1991, when I also expressed my profound grief and anxiety at the increasing severity of the war, the widening of the area of hostilities and my fear that the toll in death and destruction would escalate unless my appeal received a positive response. I continue to believe that such a response is needed in order to find a peaceful solution to this grave and tragic conflict and to save human lives. In the mean time, in order to alleviate the present suffering which is causing me deep anguish, I have already asked the main humanitarian agencies of the United Nations system to co-ordinate their efforts with a view to ensuring that help is provided to those afflicted by the conflict as soon as circumstances permit.

You will recall, Mr. Minister, that when speaking in the formal meeting of the Security Council after the adoption of resolution 678 (1990), I stressed that, in requiring compliance with the resolutions of the Council, the United Nations sought not surrender but the most honourable way of resolving a crisis in a manner that respected all legitimate interests and was conducive to the wider peace and the rule of law. I also underlined that the actions of the United Nations in the present crisis must be perceived as part of the larger endeavour of the Organization to establish peace through justice, whenever the one was imperiled and the other denied.

That remains my view today and I would therefore urge your Government to make a serious effort to put this tragic situation on the road to a peaceful solution.

(Signed) Javier PEREZ de CUELLAR